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**STRENGTHENING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NATION**



# **Strengthening Disaster Recovery for the Nation**

## **STAKEHOLDER FORUM**

### **Los Angeles, California**

**Time:** November 17, 2009, Tuesday

**Note:** This product is provided as a general summary only, not a transcript of the discussion.



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**NOTE:** This document contains the compilation of comments gathered from the Stakeholder Forum. If you have additional comments regarding any of the 16 questions that were discussed, please submit your input at [www.DisasterRecoveryWorkingGroup.gov](http://www.DisasterRecoveryWorkingGroup.gov).



### Overview Of Stakeholder Forum Process

#### Format

One (1) Stakeholder Forum was held in Los Angeles: After a brief introduction participants were divided into 6 Breakout Groups. They were asked to comment on 16 White House-prepared questions divided by theme:

- **DEFINING SUCCESS:** (Four [4] questions + *What else would you like us to know?*)
- **BEST PRACTICES:** (Six [6] questions + *What else would you like us to know?*)
- **ROLES + RESPONSIBILITIES + COORDINATION:** ("Five [5] questions + *What else would you like us to know?*")

At the end of the Breakout Session, a spokesperson for each group summarized their group's discussion to the General Assembly.

#### Invitation Process

Invitational participation for the Stakeholder Forums was similar to that of the VTCs. States were given the responsibility for inviting participants; however, greater encouragement was given to the States to include participation beyond Federal and State agencies and departments, to be more inclusive of those representing nonprofits, faith-based and private sectors, local governing authorities and others.

#### Goals + Results

- **Maximize participation.** The facilitation format offered every person an opportunity to contribute in a small group discussion. **Result:** *Every participant had a chance to participate. All participants were offered an opportunity for additional input through the Web site.*
- **All questions addressed.** **Result:** *While each question was not addressed by all participants, all questions were addressed by at least one (1) Breakout Group and usually more.*
- **Multiple perspectives represented in the conversation.** **Result:** *Nonprofits, public sector representatives, etc., were called upon by Facilitators within individual Breakouts to ensure specific viewpoints were included in the conversation.*
- **A disaster recovery conversation occurred** (as opposed to response). **Result:** *A recovery conversation was encouraged by using the "setup" found in the Facilitators' Narrative to frame the conversation. Senior project leadership and Facilitator staff used "framing" comments in opening remarks. Breakout Group facilitators repeated "framing" comments within individual groups.*



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### LOS ANGELES STAKEHOLDER FORUM AGENDA

Center for Healthy Communities – The California Endowment  
1000 N. Alameda Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Los Angeles Stakeholder Forum  
November 17, 2009, Tuesday

Registration: 8:30 am – 9:00 am (Pacific)  
Session: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm (Pacific)

#### 8:30 am – Registration (30 minutes)

#### 9:00 am – Welcome & Introduction of Workshop Sponsors

##### Welcome

Nancy L. Ward, Regional Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region IX  
Caroline H. Krewson, Deputy Regional Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Region IX

##### Opening Remarks

Dabney Kern, Chief Disaster and Emergency Management Officer, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Tracy L. Wareing, Counselor to the Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

##### Facilitation Format/Instruction

##### Transition to Breakout #1

Lead Facilitator

#### 9:15 am – Breakout Session #1 (35 minutes)

30 Minutes	Breakout Session #1
5 Minutes	Break/Transition to Breakout #2

#### 9:50 am – Breakout Session #2 (35 minutes)

30 Minutes	Breakout Session #2
5 Minutes	Break/Transition to Breakout #3

#### 10:25 am – Breakout Session #3 (45 minutes)

40 Minutes	Breakout Session #3
5 Minutes	Transition Back to Group Forum

#### 11:10 am – Report Back and Next Steps (45 minutes)

40 Minutes	Report Back by Groups
2 Minutes	Summary/Next Steps
3 Minutes	Closing Remarks

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY + EMERGING THEMES**



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Stakeholder Summary has been developed after the overall Emerging Themes (10) were identified by the analyst team and Project Leadership using the data from the 10 VTCs and the raw data from the five (5) Stakeholder Forums. Emerging Themes may change as new data is gathered (from the Web and other input channels). Specifically, the 10 Emerging Themes identified to date are:

- **Defining + Measuring Recovery Success**
- **Recovery Planning**
- **Partnerships + Coordination**
- **Communications**
- **Leadership**
- **Programs + Funding**
- **Accountability + Timeliness + Flexibility**
- **Building Back Safer + Stronger + Smarter**
- **Roles + Responsibilities + Local Capacity**
- **Training**

In addition another theme emerged from this group's discussions:

- **Role of Technology**

This Executive Summary of the Los Angeles Stakeholder Forum organizes key participant comments around the above themes. Following the Executive Summary are detailed comments organized by question across three (3) broader categories: Defining Success, Best Practices and Roles + Responsibilities + Coordination.

Generally participants feel response efforts are "ok" but longer-term recovery initiatives are "cobbled" together. Participants want State and Federal authorities to look to what other States are doing, learn how to work together and model success. One participant says that government should consider using the private sector footprint as a model for public recovery efforts and recovery efforts should include business disruption modeling, exercising and Continuity of Operations (COOP). Participants suggest better use of existing models and point to the Business Continuity Institute as a good example. Participants want to see streamlined processes and one-stop, single-point-of-contact access to recovery assistance. They note supply chains coming back on line after a disaster may be difficult, especially if owned by foreign interests. With regard to resiliency — recognizing dependence on government is understandable especially in the early aftermath of a



disaster — participants note people need self reliance and have to have determination that they will recover. Participants say resiliency first begins with individuals and individuals need to be prepared. One participant said, “Preparedness plus personal responsibility equals recovery.” Participants note metro areas need to be considered in the declaration process so that someone or some group is not on the “wrong side of the county border” and unintentionally ineligible for recovery assistance. Participants say integrating nonprofits and the private sector into recovery pre-planning and post-disaster decision-making increases recovery capacity. They note the private sector can provide models for successfully integrating and expediting economic and environmental sustainability, and nonprofit organizations are perceived by many communities as trusted agents to help deliver recovery messaging, gain public input and coordinate recovery resources. Participants look to pre- and post-disaster assessments to identify needed recovery assistance and gaps in assistance. Some participants are concerned that smaller disasters are overlooked and say there is a major gap in long-term recovery for mid-range disasters.

### Defining + Measuring Recovery Success

Participants are clear that there is a differentiation between response and recovery and that a definition of each needs to be developed. However, one participant says it is important that recovery is not separated from response; efforts should be integrated. Participants say recovery begins early and has a different “pace” than response. Some say recovery starts before the disaster event. One participant put it this way, “*Good* recovery starts *a second* after a disaster. A *great* recovery starts *before* a disaster.” Participants think communities need to define recovery success because success will likely be different from community-to-community and depend upon type and scale of disaster. Participants express various ways recovery success might be judged and/or measured ranging from a return to “normal” life, people happy, comfortable enough to send kids to daycare and/or schools and more media stories are positive than negative. They note, however, that if people do not feel like their needs are met, there is no success.

More quantifiable measures suggested include the percent of infrastructure restored, critical services back up and consumer spending is at or exceeds pre-disaster levels. Others said the number of businesses reopened and jobs resumed, insurance claims settled, building permits issued, displaced persons back in permanent housing, public offices reopened, families reunited and more. One suggests focus groups as a measurement tool. Some participants note “normal” might in



fact be a “new” normal, redefined as a result of the disaster and others say successful recoveries should minimize long-term losses. With regard to timelines against which to measure progress, participants note it is important communities understand timelines are likely different for different communities and each recovery process or activity has its own specific timeline.

### Recovery Planning

This group feels initial response and assessments are critical to longer-term recovery and recovery priorities need to be established. Participants note recovery occurs in phases marked by milestones. For example, a recovery phase might be defined as when debris is removed, or schools and day care centers reopened, or businesses are functioning again, or populations begin to return, or when recovery funds reach the community. One participant says the return of self-pride (e.g. better grooming) as a phase; another said when pizza deliveries resume. Some feel the first phase of recovery occurs before the disaster and pre-planning is critical to recovery success. One participant says that communities and recovery leadership need to adopt a “mindset of preparedness” and recovery planning should create a “play book” for recovery activities, articulating strategies for identifying and bringing in needed outside resources. Participants want to see relationships and liaisons established prior to a disaster and disaster recovery plans in place and periodically reviewed. Some suggest recovery planning should model business planning for greater efficiencies and planning should include the use of best practices in other fields when the community re-envision its post-disaster future. Capabilities and resources of likely stakeholders need to be identified and documented. Plans need to be flexible, scalable, include backup plans and tested. Plans need to include regional planning efforts and planning for various sectors needs to be coordinated and integrated. Participants want long-term recovery plans to include significant community input and allow for innovation and improvement, not just a return to the status quo. Participants say planning, both pre- and post-disaster, needs to be inclusive. All parties — private sector, public, nonprofits and others — need to be “at the table” for both coordination and planning, especially faith-based, nonprofits, volunteer entities and organizations that represent the disabled and vulnerable populations. Participants frequently express concern for the disabled, the elderly, children, those with mental health issues, the uninsured and under-insured, others with special-needs, multi-cultural communities, those with limited language proficiency, the homeless (those homeless at the time of the disaster or as a result of the disaster) or populations that are particularly vulnerable for any reason. They want assurances their needs will be addressed in pre-





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and post-disaster planning and services will be provided. They note it is important services and facilities are accessible to those with disabilities and barriers identified and removed. Pre-disaster planning needs to identify and pre-position supplies, materials and assistance for all populations, determining how much non-local help is likely needed following a disaster and where help will come from.

### **Partnerships + Coordination**

Participants feel greater attention is needed for the development of organizational structures to support longer-term recovery efforts. They also want to see greater inclusiveness and suggest an expanded operational area advisory board so that more people are brought into recovery sooner. They say partnerships are needed with private industry, nonprofits and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and are especially needed with insurance providers to coordinate and expedite payouts so recovery can begin and to ensure coverage is not canceled. They want to see a closer relationship between the Federal National Working Group (NWG) and State Emergency Management Agencies (EMAs). Participants feel better partnerships are needed between government and nongovernment recovery resource providers and that the private sector needs a greater role in recovery, pointing to the Business Executives for National Security (BENS) and Business Operations Centers (BOCs) as models. They want to see BOC participation in the EOC and, in fact, want to see all groups involved in recovery — private and public — represented at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Partnership development for both private and public partners should include the awarding of contracts pre-disaster and the development of Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) and Memorandum of Agreement (MOAs) so that resources are pre-identified and ready to go immediately post-disaster. Collaboration and a cohesive strategy are needed to ensure coordination addresses interdependencies across “lines” — between and among jurisdictions, program areas, varying recovery organizations and between levels of authorities. Some participants feel there are too many 501c(3)s and greater leadership, coordination and organization of these groups are needed to identify overlaps and avoid duplication of effort. Participants note there is a gap in coordination as response transitions to recovery and while waiting on the availability of recovery funding. Participants say a seamless transition is needed. Participants also say case management is a best practice in coordinating recovery assistance. They note the importance of FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALS) in providing guidance to the community. They say Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters



(VOAD) and Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COADs) help fill gaps in services and need greater coordination to maximize their effectiveness. Participants note Coordination Assistance Network (CAN) as a “great” management tool to track cases.

### Communications

Participants say “better communications and organization leads to better recovery.” One participant says everyone must have access to all information. A shared vocabulary and common goals are needed to facilitate communications and to ensure a shared focus. Communications strategies need to be identified pre-disaster, systems need to be pre-positioned and a variety of communications tools are needed to address different scenarios. Participants look for Federal support to provide communications assistance post-disaster and want to see improved Federal communications. One participant suggests greater use of Web engines to get information out; others want to see more than Web access, noting it is an insufficient tool for identifying recovery needs, providing information on available assistance and generally addressing recovery needs of all community members. Participants want to see outreach at the grassroots level, to chambers of commerce, volunteers, neighborhood groups, faith-based organizations and others. Outreach efforts should collect information as well as disseminate it. Communications strategies should vet information quickly to ensure its accuracy and appropriateness, provide multiple types of inputs and outputs use information to help set and manage expectations and self-correct recovery activities along the way. One participant said communications needs to be constant and there cannot be too much. Others note the importance of public education pre-disaster so that families and individuals are empowered for recovery.

### Leadership

Participants are looking for leadership to provide consistent and clear direction. They want leadership to “tear down silos” and provide for greater integration across recovery stakeholders. They look to leadership to see that appropriate policies are in place and suggest a suite of ordinances to authorize disaster recovery activities and funding in advance of a disaster. They say leadership should set and manage appropriate expectations. They think leadership should acknowledge it may not be possible to return to pre-disaster conditions — and it may not be desirable — recognizing sometimes tough decisions are needed including those that determine



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reinvesting in an area may not a good idea. When considering longer-term recovery, participants say it is important political leadership is engaged.

### **Programs + Funding**

Participants say adequate funding is a challenge to successful recoveries and more resources dedicated to recovery and recovery pre- and post-disaster planning are needed. They want to see “readiness” funding for all resource providers and money “get to locals” who, they say, understand the area and fully understand disaster impacts. They also want to see a list of local recovery resources so there is less reliance on outside contractors. States and local governments are typically cash strapped after a disaster. Participants say helping communities, individuals, businesses and local governments meet immediate cash flow needs is critical to success and in some cases can mean the difference between whether a business survives or not. Funding formulae need to go beyond current reimbursement processes to address this need. They note FEMA max grants that provide families with money as an important recovery tool and small business assistance as critical to restarting local economies. Participants want to see resources follow people and funding mechanisms support the involvement of nonprofits in recovery. Recovery programs and funding sources need to allow building back “better, “smarter” and encourage the use of “green” technologies.

### **Accountability + Timeliness + Flexibility**

Participants say post-disaster review is critically important to accountability; individual experiences need to be “unsoiled” and Lessons Learned identified, shared and applied. With regard to timeliness, this group notes recoveries need to occur quickly and economic recovery especially needs to be “faster.” One participant had a different view: When considering intentional manmade disasters, instead of focusing on longer-term needs and longer timetables, this participant suggests restoring the original pre-disaster footprint within 24 hours (as a deterrent to future acts). One participant says that everyone needs to be back in permanent housing within in six (6) months. They want to see quick reimbursements to communities and individuals, flexibility built in to existing policies and waivers so “rules” are more flexible. Flexibility in program eligibility, simplified applications and streamlining government decision-making processes are important to faster recoveries. However, they also say sufficient time needs to be allowed for recovery planning so that opportunities to build back differently can be identified and realized. They see these as



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potentially competing interests and look for a way to find balance. They want less “bureaucracy” in getting funding to people and want to eliminate providing the same information more than once when applying for assistance. Some participants suggest FEMA deal directly with and embed FEMA personnel in local agencies to expedite recovery and facilitate accessing needed recovery programs and resources.

### **Building Back Safer + Stronger + Smarter**

Participants note mitigation includes resiliency and resiliency begins with the individual. They acknowledge the difficulty in creating the “cultural shift” needed to ensure mitigation efforts are included in recovery. They suggest the development of strategic models for achieving environmental and economic sustainability that include State and Federal agencies. They want to see sustainability embedded in regulations and building codes adopted and enforced. Participants think mitigation techniques need to be “woven” into the definition of successful recovery and environmental restoration should be a success measure for recovery. Participants suggest linkages among similar agencies and want to see conflicts in regulatory requirements identified and resolved, saying they impede the delivery of recovery resources, the speed of recovery and are often barriers to the inclusion of mitigation techniques in recovery initiatives. Participants want to see more money for mitigation and say mitigation funding is needed pre-disaster. They feel a greater effort is needed in mitigation-focused public education outreach and mitigation techniques should be added to Federal education programs. They want to see incentives to encourage mitigation as well as incentives to encourage communities and individuals to meet new energy standards. Program requirements that limit rebuilding to pre-disaster standards should be examined and retooled to encourage building back “safer,” “stronger” and “smarter.”

### **Roles + Responsibilities + Local Capacity**

Participants say it is important that everyone know “who is responsible for what” and roles and responsibilities in recovery are identified pre-event. They feel roles and responsibilities should be defined from the bottom up. Local communities, agencies and authorities should lead recovery efforts with support from neighboring State and Federal agencies. Participants want to see local communities define the Federal role. One participant says government should ‘step back’ the longer recovery goes. Participants see local and State governments as providing recovery information to recovery partners and acknowledge that local governments and communities need



resources and the proper tools to speed recovery actions. Participants see a State role as helping to manage infrastructure needs and a Federal role as expediting logistics and facilitating local, private and nonprofit involvement. They suggest broadening the recognition of the State role to eliminate “log jams” so Federal money gets where it is needed sooner. Some suggest there needs to be a greater public understanding of FEMA’s role. Participants want to see formal roles articulated for the private sector and greater clarity in roles for faith-based and nonprofits. Tribal governments have a sovereign role and participants say there needs to be a greater effort to integrate Tribal governments into recovery planning and decision-making. With regard to capabilities, one participant notes a lack of building inspectors post-disaster and considers this a gap the Federal government should consider addressing. This participant notes it is hard to get people back into their homes if there are insufficient inspectors. Other participants note the general lack of available local “manpower” to run day-to-day operations and manage recovery.

### Training

Recovery-focused training and exercising are needed. Participants say preparedness and training pre-event are critical to successful recoveries. Multiple groups need to be included at the EOC “table,” and participants say it is important that these same groups are included in pre-disaster training and exercising with State, local and Federal disaster recovery partners. Participants want pre-disaster training to build local capacity and suggest pairing local staffs with non-local recovery professionals to broaden expertise. They also want to see those with disabilities included in exercises.

### Role of Technology

Participants think a greater reliance on technology can speed up the recovery. They want greater use of computer modeling to model “green” incentives for structural strengthening and to demonstrate resiliency and disaster impacts. They suggest computer programs as visualization aids to help identify gaps and to develop and test recovery strategies and “what to do next” scenarios. They suggest outreach to centers of excellence to use existing data and identify best practices, archiving those in Web-based formats for easy access. They believe good data management facilitates collaboration, coordination and recoveries. They want to see greater use of technology to document pre-disaster conditions — later used to measure recovery progress — and



pre-planning database management efforts that identify key points of contact and communications networks likely needed in recovery.

### INNOVATIVE IDEAS

- Create incentives that filter down to State and local authorities to encourage:
  - Strengthening communities and rebuilding to standards that achieve communities better prepared and able to withstand the next disaster.
  - Pre-disaster recovery planning.
- Develop a professional disaster planning accreditation program.
- Develop a feedback system, perhaps Web based, to share information, archive Lessons Learned and more.
- Rely more on the Internet and social networking for message distribution and communication.
- “Free from liability” or “hold harmless” provisions are needed to encourage greater private sector participation in recovery.
- Resource “toolbox” is needed to better understand what is available and from whom — including national resources, State, local, nonprofit and others.
  - OR a national Web-based database constructed to provide a single online portal or “one-stop-shop” for information on recovery resources.
  - OR develop an “aid matrix” that identifies available resources (Federal, State, local, nonprofit, foundations, etc.) and provides instructions on how to access them.
  - AND create a brochure that identifies resources and provides instructions on how to access them so that people can become their own advocates.
- Use Business Executives for National Security (BENS) as a model for private sector involvement in recovery.
- Incorporate innovation and sustainability into existing recovery programs.
- Consider one state’s city readiness program as a model.
- Make it a requirement for funding to demonstrate a coordinated organizational structure that includes all recovery stakeholders including nonprofits, faith-based and other NGOs.
- Encourage foundations to have a disaster recovery “seat” on their boards.



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- Include a liaison for those with disabilities and special needs in the EOC to ensure they are included in “high-level” conversations and decision-making.
- Include a liaison that represents the private sector in the EOC.
- Create a business recovery network that inventories business assets prior to the disaster and assist in rebuilding decision-making post-disaster.
- Create a national ID card to coordinate and facilitate payments to individuals in case of disaster.
- Develop a protocol for information sharing about survivors with long-term recovery groups and across recovery program areas. (NOTE: Privacy issues will need to be addressed.)
- Eliminate shared housing rules that penalize low-income families.
- Create an emergency preparedness channel to coordinate and inform 24/7.



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## **DEFINING SUCCESS**





Defining Success

### Participant Responses

(NOTE: Comments are recorded by question by group so it is clear which groups responded to which questions.)

#### Q1. (Original Q1) How would you define a successful disaster recovery?

##### Group 1

- The community has returned to social and economic normalcy.
- Further loss of life is stopped and mitigated.
- Success is knowing that you have implemented case management and met the needs of individuals.
- Success means that the disabled have been integrated into independent living after a disaster. It is so hard for the disabled to get out of institutions once they are placed in them and independent living would be an essential part of success as regards the disabled.
- Success means that everyone is back into safe and sanitary housing.
- Population levels return to normal numbers.
- Timing is important. Success means quickly coming back to normal.
- Success means that funds are used effectively.
- Success means financial recovery and there is quick reimbursement to the community and individuals for financial loss.
- Success means that the psychological needs of children and all the population are met.
- Success means that all debris fields are cleared and buildings rebuilt.
- Success means that agencies, organizations and communities come together to work for the common good.
- Successful recovery means getting technical assistance and household goods to victims. The disabled often need certain technologies and success means that they get what they need to live as they were before the disaster.
- Success means that there is less bureaucracy to get funding to people.
- We must define a new normal because success means getting back to the new normal.
- Success means that the tax base has recovered.

##### Group 5

- Getting back to business, systems up and running, people in a timely effort
  - Not just recovery but the timeframes that it takes; use milestones already established.
- Utilize the established disaster recovery plan; so plan must be in place and updated periodically to keep current.
  - Effective implementable recovery plan.
  - Effective implementation process to bring stabilization → bring community back to normal operations (pre-disaster conditions).
  - Plan must be flexible, scalable, backup plan tested.
  - Plan must be tested to ensure it works.



- Might need to establish “new normal” which assesses sustainability, mitigation and common sense that fixes problems that existing in pre-disaster conditions.
  - E.g., communities may be rebuilt differently or not at all.
  - Rebuild in a way that addresses pre-existing problems.
    - E.g., traffic.
- Build better, smarter than pre-disaster.
- Type of disaster impacts and informs the proper recovery process.
- Everyone back in permanent housing.
  - The entire community ideally in six (6) months.
- Recovery effort must be ongoing until everyone is back in permanent housing.

### Group 4

- Major disruption returns to acceptable level for all stakeholders.
- Acceptable and sustainable level – not a temporary fix.
- Schools resume, public safety resumes, utilities restored.
- Housing back to pre disaster level.
- Critical logistics chain provides necessary goods.
  - Critical logistics are necessities for daily living, i.e., from port, railroads, etc., because everything is imported.
- Recovery here in one state has national implications.
- Dept. of Transportation is working on recovery plan too. Is this connected?
- Infrastructure systems need to be returned to acceptable level.
- Rebuild with greater resiliency and newer technology.
- Lifelines e.g., water/wastewater etc., considered.
- Address interdependency across lifelines.
- Much of supply chain is foreign owned so must work with foreign firms for recovery.
- Within disaster recovery need to look at cutting dependence on foreign entities for supply.
- Housing is critical for recovery.
- Housing implies a support network such as electricity and grocery stores.
- Family reunification in a timely manner is a measure of success.
- Labor and commerce willing to return to work in vicinity of disaster area.
- No one and no business shuts down or goes bankrupt is a measure of success.
- Community input for the design and assessment of land uses and opportunities for rebuilding – decision could be relocate or not rebuild.
- Streamline government decision-making process.

### Group 6

- May not be able to return to pre-disaster (may not be desirable).
- Need to be better prepared than before.
- Definition/standard of success needs to be looked at.
- Mitigation needs to be woven into the definition of successful recovery.
- Definition needs to be more focused on long-term successful recovery.
- The community needs to define a successful recovery because it is so individualized.
  - Assess needs of the community.
- Community needs to decide goals/outcomes, which determines success.
- Some communities want to return to previous condition even if not safe, sanitary, etc.



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- Determine what is best for community and consider outsider's viewpoints for successful recovery.
- Economic growth is an indicator, sales tax revenue and employment.
- Restoration of environment and public health indicators.
- Restoration of services is key.
- Infrastructure restoration is key.

### Group 3

- Oxymoron of disaster/success.
- Timeliness is important.
- Minimizing long-term losses – e.g. business population.
- Success is getting as close to pre-disaster conditions as possible.
- Business as usual.
- Success may mean something different to the State.
- Sense of happiness/psychological recovery.
  - Important to those impacted.
- Sense that this will not happen again.
  - Significant mitigation to prevent future effects to people, no future recovery needed.
- Stabilized situation enough to go forward – manage chaos.

### Group 2

- Successful recovery means people are able to go back to normal life.
- Local government is prepared, individuals/community are proactive. If recovery strategies are in place . . . means a successful and quicker recovery.
- Local Assistance Centers are set up quickly.
- In discussing a local case history, participants said government/nonprofits/community all knew roles/responsibilities and did it!
- Return to normalcy (grocery stores open, housing returned, worker at work, hospitals and health centers open).
- "New" normal.
- Community thriving on all bases – e.g. economy, social services, government normally functioning, shopping, utilities, etc.
- Moving toward normalcy at a good rate.
- Housing – appropriate housing— in place (e.g. affordable, accessible) and schools open.
- A State that is able to attract new people.
- Disaster recovery for homeless/invisible (providers that focus on this groups at the recovery planning and decision-making table) – know role and what use they will be.
- Learn from disaster to be able to mitigate better.



### Q2. (Original Q2) Are there clear phases in the disaster recovery process that are useful milestones?

#### Group 1

- A phase is when schools and day cares are functioning. You know that people are starting to return to normal when they feel secure enough to send their children to school.
- A phase is when businesses are functioning and making money.
- There need to be initial assessments to plan for the phases and then continually thereafter.
- A phase is when the population returns.
- A phase is the restoration of quality of life. This includes public services and infrastructure essential to quality of life.
- Rebuilding is an important phase.
- One phase is the implementation of case management and assessing what needs are unmet and how to meet them. We must find out what is needed otherwise some will never recover.
- A method to assess our progress is the movement of people from temporary housing to permanent.
- It is important to triage people, dealing with extreme needs first.
- An early recovery stage includes family reunification.
- A phase is when transportation and police/fire return to normal.
- Recovery starts before the disaster event. A good recovery starts a second after a disaster. A great recovery starts before a disaster.
- An early phase is understanding the magnitude and scope of what you are dealing with.
- It is essential that planning is in place so when disaster happens you are ready to plan for recovery.
- There is a phase/milestone when helpers are able to go home. Some agencies/organizations are short term and should go back to normal jobs quickly.
- There is a phase when response turns into recovery.
- There needs to be a differentiation between response and recovery.

#### Group 5

- First step of recovery is preparation before the disaster even happens.
- Second step is response to the disaster.
- Recovery is schools back open, shelters are closed, people back in housing.
- Use established programs and processes and apply to individual communities.
- Phases.
  - Place to sleep, food, clothes, medicine.
  - FEMA or Federal Bar Association (FBA) applications – work with insurance – transitional housing, document replacement, including immigrant documents.
  - Long-term resolutions difficult with stage two, mental health; working on permanent housing.
- Establish communications, study when infrastructure restored and prioritize restoration of infrastructure.
  - Prioritization is key.
- Post review is critically important; identify and apply lessons learned, review all previous phases.



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### Group 4

- When displaced people can move out of shelters into at least temporary housing.
- When people move from temporary housing to permanent housing.
- Institute timelines and use models that are already out there (Business Continuity Institute).
- Debris and Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) removal are the first steps.
- Assessment of whether or not community is to be rebuilt based on decision of debris removal.
- Return/resume:
  - Operation.
  - Acceptable operation.
  - Normalcy.
- Collaboration and cohesive strategy for all entities to operate together in recovery.
- Families are reunified, have basic needs met and return to normalcy are important phases.
- Acknowledge the best practices already in place and overlapping characteristics of response and recovery. These are distinct phases.
- 1. Identification of work ahead, 2. Execution, 3. Completion.
- Long-term recovery plans must allow for innovation and improvement in all phases.
- Milestones for mental health from diagnosis of acute stress reaction to post-traumatic stress.

### Group 6

- Initial response and assessment are critical.
- When infrastructure services are restored especially in a timely manner.
- Deployment of recovery services and programs.
- Transition to long-term community-based recovery.
- Percent population disbursement across nation.
- Pre-planning/pre-disaster planning.
- Individual have emotional capacity to look forward to the future is a clear phase.

### Group 3

- Stabilization – no riot (first phase).
- Sales re-organization (social fabric returns).
  - Churches.
  - Community facilities.
- Self-pride (e.g. grooming: hair, shave) – realizing and returning to self respect.
- Planning, rebuilding, reconstruction.
- When pizza is delivered/Facebook available (depends on age/stage).
- E-mail/communication up and running.
- Payments issued, loans signed, grant agencies.
- Not caught in bureaucracy.
- Media knows to be engaged, critical to success (integrate into discussion).
- Successful recovery is when its marketed to people (what images are shown).
- Providing whistles: Examples of how people are faring and how to communicate to individuals through media.



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## STRENGTHENING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NATION



- Work with private entities (like Google) to get good information out (slow information is perceived as an indicator of slow recovery even if not true).
- Information to folks about recovery progress.

### Group 2

- Economy viable – return of consumer spending, investment opportunities, jobs (moving forward).
- Know what current money tax base or existing measures.
- Preventive phase – take stock of infrastructure and repair before a disaster (e.g. repair bridges pre-disaster).
- Emotional stability – tracking the amount of mental health accessed over time.
- Back into permanent housing and housing able to meet demand.
- A phase would be intermediate housing.
- Assess full extent of damage, clear debris, know money needed (generates hope as well as results and can be an emotional uplift).
- Analyze damages, repairs and recovery and retrofit – mitigate so do not have it happen again.
- Useful milestone is when funds reach community (and funds need to get to communities as soon as possible).
  - A metric could be how quickly government assists.
- All communications are fully restored (all have access to Internet, phone . . . know what succeeds, work from home).



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STRENGTHENING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NATION



### Q3. (Original Q3) What features of Federal disaster recovery assistance are most important to you?

#### Group 1

- Federal aid needs to help make services and places accessible for the disabled.
- An important form of assistance is the FEMA maximum grant which provides families with money.
- FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALS) are important because they provide guidance to the community.
- There is a gap the Federal government can help with. Often there are not enough building inspectors. Without these, it is hard to get people back into their homes and businesses. There needs to be forward planning to get regional help. Building/safety need to be integrated into response so structural aspects of disasters are taken care of. Through regional mutual assistance agreements and forward planning, we should be able to provide inspectors familiar with the area by using Federal assistance to coordinate existing systems.
- We need Federal support to provide communication help and expedite logistics.
- The mental health help is great but it does not last long enough.
- Reimbursement to counties for debris removal and infrastructure is important.
- Small business assistance is important.
- There is a gap as regards removing debris from private property and public access ways.
- We should have a national identification card to coordinate payments to individuals in case of disasters.
- The Federal government should coordinate with existing organizations like American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) to get assistance to members.
- FEMA should share information about survivors to long-term recovery groups. If such a group exists they can get information from FEMA to know how to help their community members. The current aid matrix is helpful and could be expanded.

#### Group 5

- Money – if FEMA benefits are not activated – no way to offer community benefits.
- Resources are important. These resources need to be accessible to people with disabilities and limited language proficiencies (many other languages besides Spanish).
- Integrate technology for a variety of resources.
- Eliminate shared housing rule because it penalizes low-income families.
- Work with insurance companies to get durable medical equipment more quickly.

#### Group 4

- Cash flow and the reimbursement process.
- Partnerships with private industry, e.g., private insurance to ensure coverage is not cancelled or recovery efforts are funded.
- FEMA support of temporary housing.
- Restoration of community infrastructure especially around linguistically isolated populations beyond Spanish.
- Engage multicultural communities' infrastructure because it is different.
- Simplified processes.
- Declaration of disaster by President. Allows for more access to Federal resources.





# FEMA

## STRENGTHENING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NATION



- De-conflict regulatory requirements and integrate all agencies.

### Group 6

- Money and funding without a lot of red tape.
- Consistency in policy direction and broader policy.
- Support of debris management is critical.
- Consider unique needs of children and people with disabilities and special-needs population.
- Federal government admits limitations and defers responsibility to appropriate agencies; Federal government should support State and local creative programs.

### Group 3

- Timeliness and quick response from Federal government.
- Proactive interface between Federal agencies and businesses.
  - Go to Federal authorities and they will listen.
- Tribal section to distinguish how Individual Assistance (IA) and Public Assistance (PA) relate in a tribal situation.
  - Community shared resources.
- Collaboration between Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and FEMA on housing.
- Not an address to get funding.
- Small Business Administration (SBA) rules on low limit need to be reviewed (cannot get loans if “under water”).
- Money.
- Environmental clearances to allow rebuilding.
- Regulatory waivers/relief.

### Group 2

- Ease of filling out forms, getting information.
  - Funding.
- All progress dealing with housing and reconstruction.
- Progress getting rails, schools, bus service and jobs up and running.
- Facilitate major infrastructure repairs.
  - Repair/reconstruction.
    - Roads, communication systems, airports, utilities.
- Public safety assistance– providing help to deal with criminal activity.
  - Communities are more vulnerable in a disaster.
- Regulations and accommodations for regulations.
- Recognize and accommodate regulatory specification issues.
- Develop capital at State/local level so the Federal government can pull out.
- Help public understand role of FEMA.





### **Q4. (Original Q4) How would you measure progress and what specific metrics should be considered for a successful disaster recovery?**

#### **Group 1**

- An important metric is the speed of recovery. If there is a milestone in the plan and it is reached in a good amount of time, then it shows a successful process.
- If people are happy after, there was success.
- Places like IHOP and the Waffle House are open and serving people.
- Coordination Assistance Network (CAN) is a great management tool to track as cases close.
- A metric is based on the number of people displaced and when they return home.
- A metric showing success is when people are comfortable enough to send kids to day care/schools. This can be measured through attendance numbers.
- A measurement is media response and how many news stories are being told throughout the nation and whether they are positive or negative stories. Recovery is shown when more stories are positive.
- When Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COADS) /Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs) are up and running and communication is able to happen. Communication is necessary for recovery.
- Better communication/organization leads to better recovery.

#### **Group 5**

- Percent of transit restored including accessible transit.
- A reasonable timeframe for prioritizing infrastructure restoration before moving onto next phase.
- Public entity risk institute has excellent documents on holistic community recovery.
  - Web site lists documents.
- Recovery metrics ideas:
  - Morgues back to normal capacity.
  - Percent of businesses reopened, jobs resumed or created.
  - Percent of insurance claims submitted, funded.
  - Percent of displaced persons in permanent housing.
  - Percent of road damage restored to acceptable operating conditions.
  - Percent of power restored, other utilities restored.
    - Telecom, gas, water, sanitation.
  - Percent of hospital beds and trauma centers open, blood supply adequate, prescription supply adequate.
  - Percent of classrooms open.
  - Percent of public offices open, return to normal services.
  - Percent of damaged buildings assessed, secured and disposition underway.
    - If rebuild, permits and plans.
    - If demolished, permits issued and debris removed.
    - If rezone, dialog underway with stakeholders.
  - Public health consequences addresses:
    - Airborne disease, respiratory (dust, ash).
    - Waterborne disease.



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## STRENGTHENING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NATION



- Disability access and special needs.
- Recovery effort must be ongoing until everyone is back in permanent housing.

### Group 4

- Percentage of people that are back to work, school, etc.
- Goods back in stores.
- Everything returns to an acceptable level.
- Public safety is paramount from disaster through recovery.
- Small businesses are thriving again.
- Follow-up care and check-in/measurement of well-being at specified intervals post disaster.
- Oil deliveries are made and logistics are repaired and resumed.
- Understand timeframe requirements of restoration before the disaster so the process/timeframe to ensure successful recovery is known.
- Each process has own specific timeline that needs to be understood – talk to communities with experience to understand those processes.
- Long-term physical health implications – need to track affected people and check in at specific intervals to measure health and well-being recovery.
- Private industry is very successful at Business Continuity model – can extrapolate info from this model.
- Children and reunification.
  - Number of children “missing” during disaster.
  - Number of children reunified with family.
  - Length of time for reunification of each case.
- Recovery completed: Number of areas being restored/recovered: Total number of public functions requiring recovery, number completed, percent of total; are all useful metrics/milestones.

### Group 6

- Feedback from community.
- Infrastructure restoration.
- Economic stability.
- Environmental restoration.
- Educational/engagement of community.
- Public health indicators.
- Unemployment rate, tax rate, tax reviews comparison pre/post-disaster, business licenses, insurance claims, settlement claims.
- Time element is important but need to consider aspects of individual communities.
- Measure psychological effects, prescription medications, counseling.
- Transportation effects.
- Divorce rate metrics.

### Group 3

- Number applying for building permits to rebuild.
- Insurance being paid.
- Track in/out migration (school enrollment).
- Anecdotal stories.



- Loans/grants – more SBA loans and classify by type – economic measurements and investments.
- How nonprofits do case management – see number of cases decline.
- Homeless database (HMIS) is a good example.
- Know pre vs. post numbers.
- Rental vehicles – new users, how long used.
- School psychologist – other mental health.
- Crime statistics.
- Type medicines of medicines requested/prescribed (pharmaceutical companies).
  - Antibiotics or other kinds of medicines.
- Survey people – secure an unbiased, individual group to outreach to business/residents.
- Neighborhood America Web site in Florida.
- Focus groups; e.g. neighborhood councils in Los Angeles.
- Look at satellite images to assess progress.
  - Debris removal.
- If people do not feel like their needs are met, there is no success.
- Education on best practices (shrink wrap in flood).

### Group 2

- Measuring the level of success against pre-disaster benchmarks. Levels of assistance reducing for example.
- Percent of completed projects, housing, jobs, found employment, vacant disaster center and education system back up.
- Media reports more positive stories.
- Tourists come again.



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**Q5. (Original Q16) What else would you like us to know?**

- Answers to this question informed comments made to other questions and were not specifically addressed here.

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**STRENGTHENING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NATION**



## **BEST PRACTICES**



### Best Practices Participant Responses

[NOTE: Comments are recorded by question by group so it is clear which groups responded to which questions.]

#### Q1. (Original Q5) What are best practices in managing recovery from disasters?

##### Group 2

- VOADs and COADs help fill in gaps – more coordination will help them to do this.
- “One-stop-shop” approach to get everyone in same location and coordinated.
- Get resources in place before the disaster – 211 system is important for that.
- Coordinate with disability community and coordinate with DPSs and transport agencies and sheltering – have systems in place.
- Need outreach and preparedness so people can be proactive in recovery.
- Pre-position and integrate – do not separate response from recovery; plan before disaster.
- Need communication system early – pre-positioned.
- Expand on who gets pre-positioned.
  - Include different departments.
- Have a variety of communication tools to use in different scenarios.
- Advance coordination with stakeholders.
  - Cover geography, account for diversity.
- There should be an emergency preparedness channel – to coordinate and inform public 24/7.
- Develop similar list of contingencies among regions.
  - Work across jurisdictions more.
  - Federal government can facilitate getting local, private, nonprofit involvement – get them working together outside of government.
  - Emergency response people are coordinated but there is a gap between response and when money flows for recovery.
  - Educate all parties on who has what role – who can fill what gap.
  - Need seamless transition from response to recovery.
    - Do not wait for “dust to settle.”
- Integration of building and safety department with pre-disaster planning – develop database – could expedite rebuilding and provide local knowledge.
- Train local talent ahead of time for safety assessments, etc.
  - Build capacity locally.
  - Coordinate so you know how much non-local help might be needed.
  - Pair local and non-local to broaden the expertise.
- Good data management gives you a head start to recovery – especially building off existing GIS.
- Better partnerships between government and nongovernment → invite private sector in more.
- Preparedness and training → include local talent in this.



- More practice planning for people with disabilities – there should be a department to look at this.
- Pre-award contracts to contractors for specific tasks so that things go more smoothly.

### Group 5

- Participants began by observing that recovery comes in “waves.” For example, debris removal has to occur early on. When discussing “waves,” phases of recovery began to emerge from the conversation:
  - Preparedness (Recovery Planning) Phase. Participants note “recovery starts with preparedness.”
    - Preparedness is essential to “speeding up” post-disaster recoveries, shortening the initial periods of rescue and response so that recovery efforts begin sooner.
    - It is important that mental health issues and both temporary and permanent housing needs are included in preparedness planning.
  - Immediate Recovery Phase. Participants also note that mental health and general health needs must be addressed during this phase.
  - Long-Term Recovery Phase. Participants note addressing mental and general health issues needs to continue throughout long-term recovery and that long-term planning should address the likelihood of another crisis or similar disaster occurring again.
- There are insurance challenges in seeing that payouts occur timely so that individuals and businesses have the cash flow to begin recovery.
- Greater attention and an organizational structure are needed for long-term recovery efforts. Currently long-term recovery initiatives are “cobbled” together during and after immediate rescue and response to address longer-term needs. For example, after temporary housing has been secured, there needs to be a coordinated effort to address getting individuals and families back in permanent housing.
- When considering intentional manmade disasters, one participant had a different view: Instead of focusing on longer-term needs, have the original pre-disaster footprint restored within 24 hours (as a deterrent to future acts).
  - Others agreed that recovery needs to be “faster” noting there needs to be “faster economic recovery.”
- Participants said recovery is when the community:
  - Has “rebuilt.”
  - Is back to “normal.”
  - “Back to the way things were.”
- When considering how to define best practices when rebuilding structures, participants said there needs be “recovery standards” to achieve recovery.
- Communities and recovery leadership need to adopt a “mindset of preparedness.” Preparedness planning will make for faster recoveries.
- From the private perspective, recovery efforts need support and cooperation from the business community. To ensure restoring the economy, critical milestones need to be met:
  - Businesses returning to normal business hours of operation.
  - “Normal” purchases (goods and services) are available and “normal” consumer purchasing patterns (volume and traffic) have been restored.
  - Critical infrastructure is restored so that businesses operations are possible.



- Participants note that crisis management needs to be more fully integrated with the Incident Command System (ICS).
  - A shared vocabulary and common goals are needed to facilitate communications and to ensure a common focus.
- From the public perspective, participants said the reopening of libraries, courts and public buildings were critical to recovery.
  - Support is needed for those with disabilities, the elderly, children and others who might find it difficult to help themselves.
  - Recovery assistance must be available and reachable by those that will have the most difficulty accessing.
    - Best practices for managing recovery need to ensure barriers to accessing recovery assistance are identified and solutions developed.
    - Participants note that Web access is insufficient to identifying recovery needs, providing information on available recovery assistance and generally addressing recovery needs of *all* community members.
      - Some populations have little or no access to computers or the Internet.
      - Internet support may not be available immediately post-disaster.
  - Participants note again the importance of identifying and addressing mental health issues early and maintaining a focus on mental health issues throughout the longer-term recovery process.
- Successful recoveries require more resources than those currently available. Additionally best practices need to identify “who is responsible for what.”
- When considering populations with disabilities, participants note additional challenges:
  - Shelter/housing. Using the Katrina experience of providing shelters immediately post-disaster, moving evacuees to hotel rooms and then back to shelters, participants say this is a less than coordinated approach to providing temporary and then stable, permanent and long-term housing especially for those with disabilities.
    - They note the limited number of handicap-accessible rooms and the total availability of enough needed rooms as challenges to providing appropriate post-disaster shelter.
    - Shelters need Department of Justice (DOJ) assessments.
  - Transportation.
  - Education. People with disabilities and other special-needs populations need outreach and education regarding:
    - Responders (who is going to come rescue them).
    - Resource providers to address short- and longer-term recovery needs.
    - Available assistance for short- and longer-term recovery needs.
  - Planning. Participants note the importance of including special-needs populations into recovery planning both pre- and post-disaster. Participants representing organizations that provide support to those with disabilities expressed that in current planning “special needs is just a mention and that a mention is not enough.”
    - Preparedness efforts need to be enhanced to more fully address the needs of these population segments.
    - There needs to be full integration into planning processes.
    - Appropriate and adequate resources are needed.





- Participation in exercises. Participants representing organizations that provide support to those with disabilities note the importance of including these populations in pre-disaster training and exercises.
- Representation in the EOC. One participant suggests including a liaison for those with disabilities in the EOCs so disabilities and special-needs issues are included in “high-level” conversations and decision-making.
  - Special needs should not be “buried” in public health.
  - There needs to be alternatives for structure and support even when EOC is not stood up.
- The discussion moved back to private sector priorities:
  - Participants said that a liaison is also needed to represent the private sector in EOC.
  - Participants suggest the creation of a business response network that identifies, pre-event, everything available prior to the event as a basis for considering what will be rebuilt or restored.
  - They note again that recovery is complimented by preparedness and response.
  - There needs to be a pre-disaster commitment from business senior management to provide resources post-disaster. Participants point to Business Executives for National Security (BENS) as a best practices model.
  - One participant noted that government recovery leadership should consider using the private sector footprint as a model for public recovery efforts and that recovery efforts should include business disruption modeling and exercising and continuity operations. Another participant called this “mutual learning.”
  - The Business Operations Center (BOC) should support the EOC and each should have a seat at both.
- Moving to best practices in getting information out to the public, participants note again that Web-based systems are not enough. They suggest starting with paper because all who need information may not have Web access immediately post-disaster or at all.
- Participants note that all groups and target populations need to be represented at the EOC and there needs to be operational guidance and a framework for coordinating and managing all groups.
  - Groups represented should include public and private entities.
- When considering multiple groups at the EOC “table,” participants say it is important that these same groups are included in pre-disaster exercising with State, local and Federal disaster recovery partners.
  - Exercises need to focus on more than just the restoration of critical infrastructure.
    - There needs to be a more holistic approach and view to long-term recovery of individuals and communities.
  - Plans need to address those with:
    - Limited English proficiency.
    - Homeless at the time of the disaster as a result of the disaster (but not necessarily homeless before the disaster).
    - Those without insurance.
- Some participants feel there are too many organizations with overlapping responsibilities and too many 501(c)(3)s. One participant likens it to an “octopus.”
  - There needs to be a leadership organization that coordinates all of the nonprofit and 501(c)(3) groups so that overlaps and duplication are avoided and gaps in assistance are identified.



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- “But be sure there is appropriate representation of faith-based, VOAD and those with disabilities.”
- One participant suggests that it be a requirement of funding to demonstrate a coordinated organizational structure that includes each of these groups.

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### **Q2. (Original Q8) What are best practices for community recovery planning that incorporates public input?**

#### **Group 3**

- Form ad hoc committee meetings that are transparent – public participation.
- Media, city, public information officers for agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).
- Public needs to get the correct information.
  - Vet the information quickly – do not set false expectations.
- Outreach to businesses and public – provide multiple types of input.
  - Use information to self-correct along the way.
- Cannot over communicate – need more and constant communication.
- Rely on private sector and academia to evaluate the input and assess.
  - Have them validate the data – ask for help and get everyone to the table – utilize their expertise.
- Double check loss figure before communicating to the public – it affects investment.
- Need single point of contact (entity, agency or whatever makes sense).
- Use best practices from other fields for community re-visioning.
- Working groups can form around interests with help from local assistance center – fill in the gaps as needed.
- Need local help to determine best practices for that location.
- Need to define recovery outputs.

#### **Group 1**

- Approach locals who have “stepped-up” and train them.
- Need better media outreach.
- Use incentives or consequences to encourage communities to pre-plan.
- Data collection (pre and post disaster) is important.
- Organization and communication are important.
- Everyone needs to know their roles ahead of time.
- Education needs to happen pre-disaster.
- Resilience → people need to have determination that they will recover.
- Need to have foundations with disaster or recovery boards.

#### **Group 5**

- When discussing best practices in recovery planning and public involvement in pre- and post-disaster recovery planning, participants note the importance of outreach and suggest special attention be paid to:
  - Grassroots outreach.
  - Outreach to chambers of commerce and particularly small business owners.
  - Volunteers.
  - Neighborhood groups.
  - Faith-based organizations.



- Participants particularly note that faith-based organizations have a high degree of trust within local communities and can help address language and other barriers.
- Outreach initiatives that collect information as well as efforts that disseminate information.
- Participants note that funding is a challenge to achieving successful and best practice outreach efforts.
- More funding is needed after a disaster.
- Resources are needed but none exists for pre- or post-disaster planning.
- When considering further leadership needs for groups of nonprofits, 501(c)(3)s and other NGOs, participants note that any spokesperson for these groups must be knowledgeable about each of the groups for whom he/she is speaking.
- Participants say best practices in managing recovery need to include the setting and management of appropriate and realistic recovery expectations. They note the importance of:
  - Communications systems and infrastructure in setting, communicating and managing expectations.
  - Public education in enabling and empowering individuals and families.
    - They say that school curriculums are an opportunity to promote public education and so is *Disaster Awareness Month*.
    - One participant notes that there has been a K-12 curriculum since the 1990s and it should be used.
  - Family planning as a focus of public education efforts.
    - Another participant said planning tools similar to Turbo Tax could be helpful.
  - Kids as an important target audience.
- Participants returned to the “more preparedness results in less impact on services and rebuilding ‘a lot quicker’” theme.
  - They note the need for self-reliance. They also recognize an understandable dependence on government especially in the early aftermath of a disaster or in the case of catastrophic disasters.
- Participants want to see more training and an assurance that training is appropriate and accurately represents situations that might occur.
- Returning to management of expectations, participants said that planning both pre- and post-disaster must be “realistic” and include an understanding and awareness of available resources.
  - For example, utilities may not be available. If unavailable, how fast will they be up again? The speed at which utilities are restored has a direct impact on recovery.
- Participants note the importance and need for appropriate policy to ensure recovery. Examples noted include:
  - *When will it be appropriate to use volunteers? How fast can they be put to work? How will they be managed?*
  - *How can a “quick deployment” of all resources be facilitated?*
  - *How can flexibility be included in policy so that the unique needs of each disaster and the unique needs of each community are addressed?*
  - *How will nonprofits be operationally included in recovery management?*
  - *How will credentialing be handled? Border crossings to get work crews?*



- *How will safety and background checks be handled? Especially for those who work with the disabilities community and others with special needs?*
    - Participants note that faith-based and other nonprofits need to meet “a standard” and that background checks are important.
- One participant notes, “People take too many things for granted.” For example, services, e-mail, government support may not be available immediately post-disaster.
  - Preparedness + personal responsibility = recovery.
- Participants want to know: *What responses will be available for mental health issues?*
- When considering communications needs for disaster management, participants say that a list of resources and contacts are needed to facilitate access to recovery assistance.
- Participants discussed case management in the context of best practices for managing recovery. They note especially the challenges of:
  - Losing homes.
  - Having to pay mortgages on something that “is no longer there.”
  - Upside down mortgages.
  - No job as a result of the disaster.
- One participant notes that people who survived a disaster are an under-utilized resource.
  - Another said that when using this resource care must be given to watch for mental health issues.
    - Both pre-existing and those as a result of the disaster.
  - Care must be paid to considering other disabilities within this population.
- Participants feel disasters “trigger” many issues:
  - “Sap” mortgages.
  - Housing, mental health and other issues arise.
    - Participants want to see “readiness” funding for all resource providers (expedited funding for rescue and response; dedicated funding for short- and long term recovery).
- Participants feel it is important that money “gets to locals” who know the area and fully understand disaster impacts. There needs to be a list of community recovery leadership and resources that can address recovery and less reliance on contractors.
  - Post-disaster funding is needed for medical equipment to address increasing needs for medical attention.
- Participants feel that metropolitan areas need to be considered in the declaration process to avoid unexpected and unintended consequence of restricted assistance because someone or some group is on the “wrong side of the county border.”



### **Q3. (Original Q10) As disaster recovery is primarily a State and local leadership issue, what are best practices for the timing (including start and end) and form of Federal assistance and coordination?**

#### **Group 1**

- Private, faith-based and public are the leaders in recovery – State and local have a role in coordinating and supporting but then should step out of the way.
- Recovery is bottom driven.
- The longer recovery goes, the more government should step back → government should help get coordination going prior to disaster and help keep it on track.
- Educate people that the government is on the front end but government should manage expectations and cities should be better prepared.

#### **Group 6**

- Participants think that speed is important when considering recovery. More specifically, participants expressed a need for:
  - Early planning and engagement of recovery during initial response activities.
  - Planning that includes a well-articulated transition to recovery.
  - Recovery efforts that are sensitive to the incident level.
  - First assessments to be considered at recovery.
- Participants also expressed the importance of communications in recovery:
  - *From what sources will information be available? From whom?*
  - *Who puts information together and packages it for distribution?*
  - *When and how is it distributed?*
- Participants say that a week or two to get things done is not enough. Longer-term resources and efforts are needed.
  - Resources must be well-trained. More training is needed and according to these participants, training is needed “everywhere,” at the field level, within the EOC and at shelters.
- Participants would like best practices to include an expanded operational area advisory board so that more people are brought into the recovery process.
  - They also think recovery begins pre-disaster. The more that is identified and articulated at pre-disaster planning stages, the faster recovery will be achieved.
- Participants note there are differences in how information will be captured depending upon whether it is a rural area or urban area and that information needs to be captured before recovery efforts “move in.”
- Participants also say that recovery start and end dates will be different for different disasters and needed resources will be different. They generally note differences that might occur in recovery from earthquakes, H1N1, dirty bomb or radiation release.
- Generalist and specialists need to be brought in to the recovery area early on. Special attention should be paid to having specialists on the ground to address those with disabilities and special needs populations.
  - Efforts need to be inclusive of all populations.
- To assist in understanding what is needed, participants suggest planning during recovery and that planning begin “day one of the incident.” They also think pre-disaster planning is



important to understanding what will be needed post-disaster. Both planning efforts need to:

- Create a play book.
  - Capture baseline information and disaster impacts.
  - Plan center locations.
  - Articulate strategies for bringing in outside resources to the center. Participants specifically mentioned Red Cross as well as professionals and subject-matter experts.
  - Include a transition plan from short-term rescue and response to longer-term recovery.
- Plans need to be exercised and meetings to conduct exercises need to be regularly scheduled and ongoing.
- Participants want to see a mutual aid advisory committee that updates standardized emergency systems so that lessons learned in the field and an understanding of what is successful can be institutionalized and replicated.
- When focusing on form of assistance, participants especially note:
  - Rental assistance and vouchers as helpful forms of assistance.
  - The benefits of Federal checks is recognized but also noted for their limitations in effectiveness. For example, a check cannot be written for rent if there are no rental units available.
  - They want to see:
    - Simplified forms, applications, access and eligibility requirements.
    - More face-to-face help in accessing resources.
    - Open public housing.
- Participants note the usefulness of public forums as a tool to gather community input.
  - They caution that victims are traumatized, may have low literacy and will likely find the system hard to negotiate (especially the elderly).
- More resources (all kinds) are needed for small and large disasters.
- Facilities need technological infrastructure.
  - Recovery efforts should rely more fully on technology to speed up the delivery of resources and assistance.
  - One participant said it this way, “Leverage technology to get money out quicker.”
- Training materials; materials that explain what to expect; and materials that identify resources and provide instructions on how to access resources should be created pre-disaster and shared.
  - Disaster impacted citizens may need guidance on what to do and to how to use recovery funds. The example noted was help in understanding that purchasing sheets and towels with disaster recovery assistance funds are a better priority than a new television.
- In general, participants want to see more local assistance centers with more support and more resources.





### **Q4. (Original Q12) What are best practices for marshaling Federal assistance - both financial and professional support-to support State and local efforts to recover from a disaster and how can we work together to better leverage existing Federal grant dollars?**

#### **Group 3**

- Use a single point of contact, which would educate people about funding to get people up to speed.
- Matching funds and State or county involvement can diminish strength of funds.
- Unify city/county

#### **Group 1**

- We should take the triage approach – figure out priorities.
- Everyone needs to define response versus recovery.
- Evaluate funding programs to make sure funds are well spent → educate people to know how to use funds wisely.

#### **Group 6**

- Participants began this part of the discussion by noting that a lot of the responses to the last question apply to this question and by acknowledging what's been done (in the past with regard to recovery) might not be the best for going forward.
- Participants suggest that developing more of a business plan rather than a government plan might result in greater efficiencies.
  - Modeling business planning and business recovery planning could be useful.
  - However, participants also recognize there are political issues unlikely to “go away,” specifically pointing to accountability and oversight that results in spending \$1 to track \$0.01. Business planning does not necessarily have to have the same kinds of accountability that government has to have or to the same degree.
- Participants note the lack of a coordinated and comprehensive infrastructure for recovery and suggest developing a “suite of ordinances” to authorize disaster recovery activities and funding in advance of a disaster.
  - The suite needs to “fit” recovery models as opposed to rescue and response models.
- When considering how to leverage existing Federal resources, participants had several suggestions. Specifically they want to see:
  - R & D as a part of National Incident Management System (NIMS).
  - More research:
    - To find more best practice examples.
    - So that planning is evidence- and need-based.
      - One participant noted that experiments are appropriate and useful: “See if having x, y, z in the area works.”
    - To help identify gaps in recovery assistance for all populations (using kids as example).
  - Pre-positioned recovery infrastructure that relies on real-time data to ensure the speedy delivery of assistance.
    - Give faith-based organizations a “crack” at recovery infrastructure development and the delivery of recovery resources.





- Pre-positioning should include pre-disaster:
  - Developed procedures for recovery.
  - Developed policies to manage and coordinate recovery assistance.
  - Availability of supplies.
- Participants believe structure is needed for a well-organized and coordinated recovery that results in the efficient use of resources, as well as recovery modeling.
  - One participant said, “We know we will have a disaster. . .”
- Enhancing mitigation efforts, ensuring they are included in rebuilding and focusing on resiliency results in “leveraged” recoveries because communities are “better” and stronger post-disaster than pre-.

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### Q5. (Original Q14) What are best practices for integrating economic and environmental sustainability into recovery?

#### Group 4

- Participants note that oil companies and other private sector entities can provide models for successfully integrating economic and environmental sustainability.
- Recovery funding needs to allow building back “better,” beyond the pre-disaster footprint. Rebuilding initiatives should allow for the use of “smarter” and “green” technologies and encourage efficiencies in the post-disaster community.
- Participants feel all parties — including the private sector and not just regulatory agencies — need to be “at table” for pre-disaster planning. They want to see relationships and liaisons pre-identified pre-event and a focus on coordination among and between stakeholder groups and all levels of authorities (State, Federal, Tribal and local).
- Participants said, “Fund mitigation pre-disaster” to ensure more effective recoveries.
- Conflicting State and Federal environmental rules need to be addressed during an incident and pre-incident.
  - Efforts need to focus on how to expedite recovery and how to expedite economic and environmental recovery.
- Participants feel there is a contradiction in effort. They want recoveries to “speed up” so communities recover as quickly as possible and they want recoveries to slow down to allow time to include and address environmental concerns.
  - A quick recovery needs to be balanced with long-term goals.
  - Participants note this may be an intense political challenge.
- Participants feel waivers are needed so “rules” are more flexible.
  - They feel State government is key and are concerned that “things are ‘lost’” between State, county and Federal agencies.
  - They note processes are “paper intensive.”
  - Transparency is important to achieving economic and environmental sustainability. Efforts need to be clear, hurdles need to be identified and understood.
  - Participants think there needs to be a better pre-existing and pre-event process and that communications need to be streamlined.
  - “Politics” can be a barrier and some in this group feel that political influence must be removed for the process.
- Participants note that mitigation includes resiliency. Both are part of a single whole.
- They want to see construction of a strategic model for achieving environmental and economic sustainability that includes State and Federal agencies.
  - One participant notes the importance of ports and efforts need to begin at that point and expand outward.
  - Another suggests a “life line” council that includes organizations like AT&T, the ports, other services and transportation to identify recovery priorities and properties that need immediate attention so that other recovery efforts can begin.
  - One participant suggests broadening the recognition of State roles to help eliminate “log jams” so that Federal money gets where needed.
  - Another noted that SBA loans require using disaster technology and/or building methods that result in a rebuilding to pre-disaster standards, making it difficult to incorporate newer technologies and best practices in rebuilding efforts.



### Q6. (Original Q15) What are best practices for integrating mitigation and resilience into recovery?

#### Group 3

- Need incentives → identify risks, mitigate, and provide incentives → otherwise it has to be a cultural shift.
- Resiliency – do not just mitigate → need to include building sustainably in our regulations – including in building codes; must also enforce the codes.
- Economics → driven by private sector.
- Retrofits are needed; need to provide funding or incentives.
- Need to define resiliency.
- Need networks in place to ask for help.
  - Educate individuals to know what they will need to do to get prepared – needs to be a priority and focus on special needs.
  - People need a plan built for them to foster recovery – they will not do it on their own.
  - Need education, legislation, etc. – start with children – to improve resiliency.

#### Group 1

- More mitigation money.
- Need to do exercises and training for recovery.
- Recovery should be part of emergency planning.
- Educate people that the government is on the front end but government should manage expectations and cities should be better prepared.
- Recovery needs to be as contemporary as response → be as prepared.
- Get communities to look at what a disaster is → are we thinking too small?
- Infrastructure is key to recovery.
- Community involvement → need better engagement pre-disaster to think about recovery.
- Access to resources → need brochures to identify resources to help people know where to go and become their own advocates → become more independent.
- Need system to help people avoid filing out same information for paperwork.

#### Group 4

- Participants segued into this question by discussing the Business Executives for National Security (BENS) program and suggest using it as a national model. It has a relationship with one particular state's Resilience Alliance, representing a significant industry component. [NOTE: BENS is a national, non-partisan nonprofit. It facilitates regional and public-private partnerships to strengthen disaster response and homeland security capabilities through public-private collaboration. It operates two (2) partnerships in one state and has MOUs with the one state's Governor's Office of Emergency Services to fully integrate into the state's standardized emergency management system.
- Participants moved on to discuss mental health issues and their importance to resiliency. Education and family education centers are key to addressing mental issues. Public exposure to build awareness of the possibility of mental health issues during and after a



disaster is critical to “inoculating” against more severe effects. Prior preparation is the best “defense.”

- One participant said it this way, “Prepared not scared.”
  - Another said: preparedness = less helplessness => increased recovery.
- Participants want to see mitigation added to Federal education programs.
  - They also want incentives encouraged nationally and that filter down to State and local authorities, for strengthening communities and rebuilding to standards that achieve communities that are better prepared and able to withstand the next disaster.
    - One participant notes that there are “great” homeowner insurance discounts for mitigation efforts.
    - Another said, “We need to model “green” incentives” for structural strengthening.
    - And another said that computer modeling that demonstrates resiliency can serve as examples of impacts and what to “do next.”
- Participants want “open architecture” in planning, to include input from port authorities and other stakeholders and want to see data pulled from various groups, not just a single entity.
- Participants note competing interests:
  - Some participants see the requirement to meet new energy standards as a cost barrier to investing when upgrading facilities.
  - Others see the need to require higher standards when rebuilding and that Federal and other resources and incentives and grants are needed to help businesses and local governing authorities meet the higher standards.
    - Participants suggest financial incentives and tax incentives.
- As recovery moves forward resiliency should be built in. Participants suggest documenting what would make a community, area or building more resilient — “document and address.”
- Returning to computer modeling capabilities, participants note that modeling can advance recovery by helping to visualize gaps and develop recovery strategies. Outreach should occur to centers of excellence to use existing data and identify best practices.
  - One participant said, “We need to get all past studies.”
  - State and Federal regulations should facilitate building and using the knowledge base.
- Participants note that tough decisions are sometimes needed. Decisions may include those that say, “Do not reinvest.”
- Simplicity is needed so that stakeholders understand regulatory issues, know programs that can help communities incorporate mitigation techniques into recovery and streamline applications for assistance.
- Financial systems need to get immediate cash so that other recovery initiatives can progress.
- One participant notes that greater use of technology to document pre-disaster conditions to use as benchmarks can facilitate recovery, making it easier to identify priorities and measure progress.
- Participants observe that experiences tend to be “soiled” and encourage looking at successful events and to rely on them as models:
  - Documenting what was done.
  - Assessing what worked and what did not and articulating lessons learned.



- Sharing information and experiences through exercising.
- Identifying changed behaviors.

### Q7. (Original Q16) What else would you like us to know?

#### Group 4

- The Federal family of programs and local programs need greater integration.
  - Response “seems ok – recovery is not.”
- Leadership needs to “tear down silos.” For example, there needs to be greater integration and coordination of housing assistance, transportation and health and human services.
  - Strategies need to be planned together.
  - It was noted by these participants that the Working Group for this initiative (*NDRF and Report to the President*) includes all departments. Participants think that is important and a positive step forward.
    - One person said it was “eight (8) different silos rolling into one (1).”
  - Participants also want to see a closer relationship between the Federal National Working Group (NWG) and State Emergency Management Agencies (EMAs). The interest in connectivity is not a new issue.
    - A Coast Guard focus on greater integration and connectivity was launched two (2) years ago.
    - The Department of Transportation might have issued a resiliency document.
    - Participants note the example of State Incident Management System (SIMS) compatibility with NIMS.
  - Participants note that States need to connect.
    - Federal government looks to States because they have the most disaster expertise and experience.
    - Regional planning should be a part of the process.
    - Work needs to be leveraged.
    - State and Federal authorities need to look at what other States are doing, learn how to work together and model success.



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**STRENGTHENING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NATION**



## **ROLES + RESPONSIBILITIES + COORDINATION**



### **Roles + Responsibilities + Coordination** **Participant Responses**

[NOTE: Comments are recorded by question by group so it is clear which groups responded to which questions.]

#### **Q1. (Original Q6) What are the appropriate State, local and Tribal roles in leading disaster recovery efforts?**

##### **Group 1**

- Tribal governments have a sovereign role.
- Community-led recovery – county participates, but recovery should have a community lead.
- Local and State governments should provide long-term economic relief.
- Locals should simplify/streamline the regulatory process to aid rebuilding.
- State and local role in identifying alternative housing for displaced people. There can be later difficulty with return. Help bring them back, or avoid the need for displacement.

##### **Group 2**

- Local agencies should lead, with support from neighboring agencies, State and Federal agencies and Tribal governments - like fire response.

##### **Group 3**

- Large jurisdiction's role is to direct action – no State pass-through is needed.
- Bring Tribes to the table.
  - Government to government contact is needed. Tribes feel left out of county plans and actions.
  - Tribal connection to State and Federal governments should be direct.
- An increase in emergency awareness is key.
- Local government's role is planning and building relationships with other agencies as well as funding.
- Collaboration among key parties is needed in recovery.
- Coordination – no conflicts, understand one another's needs and priorities.
- Locals should receive and disseminate information to facilitate decision making and inform public.
- Local governments must truly implement and manage a recovery plan.
  - For instance, coordinate road and utility improvements during recovery to avoid duplication of effort.
- Collaboration should include everyone – private sector, Nonprofits, NGOs, faith-based groups, government.
- Define the capabilities of stakeholders.
  - Start talking early and work to eliminate redundancies.
  - Nonprofits, faith-based organizations – all know to use recovery centers. All met monthly for status reports to eliminate redundancy in recovery and share knowledge.



- Identify unmet needs through sharing case management with Community Response Teams (CRT).
- Recovery structure and capacity varies in different jurisdictions.
- Consider language needs – governments struggle to provide recovery services to foreign language speakers.
- Government should provide a forum/convene nonprofits and organizations.
- Locals should define what the Federal role should be.
- Make sure stakeholders understand the state system with county, State responsibilities.
  - Educate communities to ensure their success.
- Regional coordination can direct help to affected cities from unaffected areas.
- Governance is a key element in the recovery framework.
- In executing recovery, find ways to expedite and streamline actions, focus on goals.
- CRT model is a good one – NGO, with county involvement.

### Group 5

- Pre-positioning supplies in preparation for recovery.
- State and local roles are to coordinate and provide information for recovery efforts.
- Consider a MOU which would identify important parties and mutual aid in advance of the recovery.
- The State's role is to manage local infrastructure during response and recovery.
- State and local should assist partners through recovery process.
- Better communication to all impacted parties would help better understand what funds are available.
- Federal needs improvement in communication.
- State and local should assist in the overall process, forms and mechanisms during recovery.
- It is important to deliver the same message to the public. "Trained media/responsible media."
- National coordination is needed, specifically in creating a database of resources – "de-evolutional plan."
  - National coordination.

### Group 6

- State and local need to be involved at the initial phase of efforts.
- Recovery efforts should start from the bottom up.
- State and local should play the role of coordination and response.
- State and local should be involved in estimating the impact of the disaster and what the immediate and long-term needs are for that community.
- State and local should serve as the key corresponded to Federal in terms of declaration.
- One state currently provides public assistance, working directly with applicants, providing local guidance.
- The individual provides service delivery.
- Individual base relationships need to be created between clients and the providers of recovery services.
- Community needs to be incorporated into initial phase of recovery.
- Need to look at infrastructure and how quickly we can restore it. Should involve better coordination with the local government.





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- Coordination between private entities is the key to a *higher level* of coordination in recovery
- Advocate children as part of the recovery process, what are their specific needs.
- Mutual aid system need to be better coordinated for the long-term recover in order to be effectively used.
- Political leadership needs to be built into the long-term recovery process.
- Consider creating a local assistance center or “one-stop-shop,” to better facility resources during recovery.
  - Need to move quickly and get buy-off.
- Currently, the State and local provide “just in time” healthcare services. Better communication needs to happen in order to provide a more smooth system of response. This should include better communication with the nonprofit and a better understanding of the local healthcare capacity and need.

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### **Q2. (Original Q7) How can the nonprofit and private sectors be better integrated into recovery?**

#### **Group 1**

- They can provide resources for independent living in recovery.
- NGOs need to reach out. Many people will only turn to a trusted person or group to provide services.
- We need a funding mechanism to involve nonprofit organizations driving recovery – involvement could include case management, other needs.
- Involve nonprofits/ NGOs in pre-planning.
- Nonprofit and private sectors must avoid duplicated efforts and chain of action problems.
  - NGOs often need help - fire departments may be needed to provide access for utility companies, for instance.
- Recovery organizations should include all interested organizations – churches, agencies, government, nonprofits and NGOs.
- There should be community-led recovery committees including disabled representation.
- The Federal government should enlist organizations and resources for notifications, aid and recovery efforts – for example, AARP.

#### **Group 2**

- Nonprofits, NGOs, private sector should be at the table.
- Agencies should know groups (including private, nonprofits and NGOs and their capabilities).
- NGOs have unique community understanding, which can help reach the underserved.
- Pre-award contracts to private sector and nonprofits for recovery activities.
- Include NGOs in the planning process from the beginning – including exercises and planning. This would lead to more efficient recovery.
- Liability issues for the private sector. “Good Samaritan” laws should be broadened.
  - Insurance needs.
  - Legislation would be required.
- A system is needed to identify needs – equipment, etc.

#### **Group 3**

- Need to identify capabilities through MOUs and share contact/communication information.
- In Florida, banks did a percentage of SBA loans – need to manage relationships with business in recovery – financial institutions played a critical recovery role in one particular state.
- Nonprofits can serve as a trusted agent or interface with government and can be act as a neutral third party.
- There is a need for improved information sharing, including advance coordination and sharing of information. Need a system.
- Comprehensive planning process must begin early.
- Regional planning and information sharing should be function-based.
- Government agencies have to identify needs early and seek coordination with private sector organizations.



- Gap analysis is needed, to include government and private sector.
- Research is key in bringing nonprofits and private sector together, identifying capabilities.

### Group 5

- A good example of this integration is the VOAD organization → good coordination, pre-coordination and accessible.
- Invite nonprofit and private sectors to the table for pre-planning efforts.
- Create task forces to better understand who are the key players and partners.
- Nonprofit should be integrated to better understand local needs and resources. They might also be able to provide better local communication.
- One gap within the VOAD is operations management.
- Need to include nonprofits in order to have resources in place before a disaster.
- Does the current legislation allow nonprofits to participate in “testing and pre-planning?”
- Nonprofit service providers should provide accessible resources.
- Recovery and response services vary by sector (State, local, nonprofit and private). We need to identify the overlapping services and identify responsibilities. It is important to extend relationships between commercial sector as well (pre-disaster).
  - The “Critical Infrastructure Plan” is a good example in Southern California.
- Provide incentives/ provisions to allow “Free from liability” or “hold harmless” in disaster situation.
- 501(c)(3) – business network response needs further development and should be readily available with resources pre-disaster.

### Group 4

- Nonprofit needs to be engaged at both the local and national level, acknowledging the experience and knowledge they offer.
- Understanding what is the “core” of the community (i.e., faith-based organizations)
  - Good example is the VOAD framework, which involves local community-based organizations.
- Need to gain a better understanding of provision of resources in order to increase capacity
- The legal issues within the private sector provide a challenge with information being private.

### Group 6

- Insurance providers need to be better integrated to better understand who has what responsibility. Currently there is some overlap between what the insurance will cover and what the government will cover. This leads to confusion and no action.
- Nonprofit and private sectors need to build relationships and understand resources before the disaster. Their information is an important “resource.”
- They should be engaged in the process according to their strengths.
- Does private sector have more “strengths?”
- Communicating is key, both with the private sector and the public, in order to better understand needs.
- Create a resource “toolbox” to better understand what is available and to whom.
- By integrating the nonprofit and private sectors, capacity increased and provides the opportunity to reach to a broader group.



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STRENGTHENING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NATION



- By integrating both nonprofits and private sectors into the recovery process, diversity is created among the resources available.

**Q3. (Original Q9) How can Federal, State and local disaster planning and recovery processes and programs be best coordinated?**



### Group 1

- Pre-planning and coordination is needed among Federal, State and local agencies.
- Conduct exercises for recovery, not just response exercises.
- National identification system would aid coordination.
- FEMA and State are well integrated into teams in one particular state's VAOD – guidance in recovery gives them a “stealth role.”
- FEMA – effective recovery in Sayre fire.
- Educate the public and community leaders on appropriate roles, including what FEMA will and will not do (*Stafford Act*).
- In one city – 45 agencies continue to meet after disaster in the recovery period.
- Large jurisdictions in one state can function as States – look at different needs in different types of jurisdictions.
- FEMA can deal directly with local agencies in recovery – they should be embedded.

### Group 5

- Identify task forces to better understanding roles and responsibilities and available funding.
- Need to build flexibility within existing policies.
- The allocation of funds between Federal governments directly to local needs better coordination.
- A city readiness program is a good model in one state.
- Processes are best coordinated by standard communication systems
- Need to establish a back-up plan for communication – EOC.
- Need an “aid matrix” to show what resources are available. This matrix should include resources from Federal, State and local.
- Encourage preventive measures when possible.

### Group 4

- Outside consultant.
- NIMS example for response and Business Continuity model.
- A good benchmark is a state's particular ports example.
- Inclusion of Federal partners in planning process with State and local. Would help to understand what resources are available outside of a state a disaster happened in.
- “Recovery coordination system” for the long term.

### Group 6

- Resources could be better coordinated if there was a better understanding of what national resources are available. Creating a national database could facilitate this information and provide a “one-stop-shop” via the Internet.
- Money is key factor!
- Coordination starts at the local level and works up.
- Technology needs to be updated for recovery efforts:
  - The idea of having a “disaster portal,” where the public is involved to help build and update an “on-line” portal of resources.
  - Brings up the issue of dealing with people who do not have access to the Internet. Needs to also address an alternative form of communication.



- Recovery forms of communication and technology in the disaster recovery process are also important. Would also need to plan for an alternative form of communication for when technology is down.
- EOC needs to have people's contact information in order to increase speed of response
- Disabled population needs to be included in recovery – what items do they need in the long term.
- Public's role in to provide local information and knowledge. They are a great resource to take advantage of.
- Social frameworks to advance technologies for recovery. Federal, State and local need to harness this effort, but not control them.
- "Smaller" disasters are still a recovery issue and seemed to be overlooked for the long-term recover. What can be done?
- A major gap in long-term recovery is the "mid-range" disaster.
- Big question from the group is how do we keep coordination and follow-up going through the long-term?
- The key to success is that everyone has access to all information!



### **Q4. (Original Q11) What are the greatest capacity challenges that local and State governments face in disaster recovery and what are the best practices for increasing that capacity?**

#### **Group 1**

- Lack of financial resources and manpower.
- We reinvent recovery every time. What pieces need to be addressed?
- Recovery gap analysis and exercises should be conducted prior to disaster.
- Broadcast best practices for recovery rather than reinventing the wheel.
- One city is the local gold standard – formalize an analysis of recovery and associated issues and share lessons learned.
- Leveraging local resources in order to respond to disaster is a challenge.
- Transportation capacity in recovery must include accessible transportation – this is needed to get people back into their homes.

#### **Group 2**

- All parties must be at the table. Local governments must reach out to private and nonprofits before disaster.
- Proper early planning is needed, with everyone involved.
- Agencies need to know people with nonprofits and in the private sector – personal connections are very important.
- Government has a different pace for recovery.
- Recovery is more important to locals – with proper tools, locals could speed recovery actions.
- “Local” means different things; some organizations are more tightly connected to the community than others.
- More money is needed – local planning is a function of Federal money available (no debris management plan funding for earthquakes, for instance).
- Right people must be at the table – it is very complex in one state at the regional level – use the Internet to reach out/communicate.
- There needs to be grassroots involvement.
- There needs to be a community piece. Government should provide a template, but community needs are different – allow flexibility.
- Professionalize disaster planning – develop an accreditation system.
- Need a system for feedback – thoughtfully respond to suggestions and needs.
- Internet/social networking can be a tool for information distribution and communication.
- Plan for communication resilience.

#### **Group 3**

- Locals need money right away, with no match.
- Leadership capacity is needed. Regional structure?
  - Get into detail about recovery actions.
- Fluid population in recovery – the population shifts after disasters.
  - Resources need to follow people.



- Agencies need to evaluate whether movement is encouraged and develop a reception plan, a plan for movement back.
- Recovery – population comes back to what? What improvements are needed to improve neighborhoods?
- Meet immediate shelter needs, then long term rebuilding – avoid repetitive loss and consider resilience.
- Legal liability can be an issue for private sector and nonprofits in response and recovery – zoning, private access rules.
- Children's needs are important - reunification area needed.
- Insurance/underinsurance is a major barrier to recovery.

### Group 5

- Leveraging local resources in order to respond to disaster in a timely fashion.
- Under-estimated private sector as a resource.
- The current acquisition process.

### Group 4

- Money – how is funding allocated?
- Utility grid is biggest challenge in one state.
- Removal and disposal of debris after earthquakes.
- “Just in Time” attitude – not enough supplies in stock (i.e., oil) pre-disaster.
- State does not have enough money.
- Need a system to distribute funding appropriately.
- Dispersed population of one state – making communication difficult due to size.
- How to deliver goods after earthquake when infrastructure is down.
- Technology: networks do not have the capacity yet and need to streamline.





### **Q5. (Original Q13) What unmet needs are common to most disasters that do not seem to be adequately addressed under the current systems and programs?**

#### **Group 1**

- Individual assistance is a problem.
- Economic issues arise with housing financing for the rebuild – insurance problems.
- Accessible and usable housing for recovery is an unmet need. There must be HUD involvement.
- Linkages among similar agencies are important for resilience.
- Federal agencies should coordinate “building people” – architects, National Association of Home Builders, engineers – to address affordable housing needs.
- Assistance to renters is scarce.

#### **Group 2**

- Needs of special populations are not met – elderly, children, non-English speaking, those with disabilities, health needs.
- Air quality during recovery is an important concern, not currently evaluated.
- Pets – there is inadequate capacity and limited shelter options. Transportation back in recovery is a problem.
- Reunification.
- There is a time lag between shelter closing and the availability of long-term housing.
- We need an agreement on what temporary housing is (there are different guidelines now).
- Identify capacity in neighboring States/countries.
  - Consider return needs, border crossing.
- Water is a major issue in one state – who can manage this following disaster, including transmission and distribution.
- Identify technologies that can help meet recovery needs.
- There is a local need for disaster preparedness.

#### **Group 3**

- Demographics – some populations do not seek services. Nonprofits are a good resource to reach out to the underserved.
- Psychological stress following disaster is an unmet need.
  - Faith-based, other organizations can help following disaster. Focus on psychological return to normalcy.
- Key points:
  - Regional coordination.
  - Community based recovery – people will not respond to mandate.
  - Tie recovery planning to funding.
    - There is a need for evaluation and redirection of resources, including flexibility to allow midstream changes in approach.
- Reach out to unrepresented communities.

#### **Group 5**

- Unrepresented communities.



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## STRENGTHENING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NATION



- Need to strengthen current systems and emphasize their enforcement.
- Low-income families' needs are not adequately addressed. There is no preparation due to a lack of understanding of their needs.
- "Preparedness funds" in terms of public education to prepare in advance of a disaster.
- Existing FEMA benefits are not adequate and need regional adjustments.

### Group 4

- Pets.
- Language and access.
- Understanding of logistic changes (i.e., distribution of goods).
- Impact of the disaster on people with basic functional and access needs.
- Children.
- Provision of medication and vaccines needed in both response and recovery.
- Physical health implications.
- Safety and police services – public safety.
- Streamline regulations – repair and rebuilding among agencies.
- Lifeline interdependency.
- Innovation and improvement to incorporate sustainable practices in to current systems and programs.
- Cash flow.
- Affordable housing in the long term. Need to consider having shelters in place.
- Better understanding of what insurance policies cover and what ether insurance or government programs cover.
- Insurance companies should be taxed lower on disaster funding.



### Q6. (Original Q16) What else would you like us to know?

#### Group 5

- What are the resources available for this disabled?
- Telecommunications needs improvement.
- Coordination Across Nonprofits (CAN) –is an example but is difficult to train on software. Needs improvement.

#### Group 4

- Dispersed population is a challenge in one particular state.
- ESF #14 – Long-term Community Recovery format needs updated.

#### Group 6

- Only have local perspective in this group, no State representatives at this table